



**IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

**May 4, 2006**

**For immediate release**

- 1. Governor's environmental awards program honors Iowa leaders**
  - 2. Public's help needed to improve water quality in the Cedar River**
  - 3. CWSRF reaches \$500 million milestone for water quality**
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Note: Media are invited to attend awards ceremony.

Contact: Jill Cornell, (515) 281-0879; [Jill.Cornell@dnr.state.ia.us](mailto:Jill.Cornell@dnr.state.ia.us)

## **GOVERNOR'S ENVIRONMENTAL AWARDS PROGRAM HONORS IOWA LEADERS**

DES MOINES — Eight Iowa organizations and businesses will receive environmental excellence awards from Lt. Gov. Sally Pederson at a ceremony May 11 in Des Moines. The recognition is part of a program honoring Iowans for their leadership and innovation in protecting Iowa's natural resources.

"I am proud to recognize these Iowans for taking active roles in protecting our natural resources," said Pederson. "Their leadership serves as a model in implementing environmental sustainability across the state of Iowa."

The awards program recognizes comprehensive environmental programs by organizations and businesses, along with special project awards in water quality, air quality, waste management, habitat restoration/development, and energy efficiency/renewable energy. The winners were chosen from nearly 30 nominations and include:

### Environmental Excellence Award:

Farmland Foods, Inc., Denison

Iowa Renewable Energy Association, Iowa City

Special Recognition in Energy Efficiency/Renewable Energy:  
Consumers Energy, Marshalltown  
Thorland Company, Cedar Rapids

Special Recognition in Waste Management:  
Waste Management, Mason City

Special Recognition in Water Quality:  
Dr. Walter Cunningham School for Excellence – 4th Grade Expanded Learning  
Program, Waterloo  
Jefferson, Keokuk, and Washington Soil & Water Conservation Districts  
Skunk River Navy, Ames

Complete details about each award winner and the awards program are available at:  
[www.iowadnr.com](http://www.iowadnr.com).

The ceremony will take place at the State Historical Building auditorium in Des Moines on May 11 at 2:00 p.m. The awards are sponsored by the Governor's Office, the Department of Natural Resources, the Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, the Department of Economic Development, the Department of Education, the Department of Public Health and the Iowa Waste Reduction Center.

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## **PUBLIC'S HELP NEEDED TO IMPROVE WATER QUALITY IN THE CEDAR RIVER**

*Public meetings announced for Charles City, Waterloo, Cedar Rapids*

DES MOINES — The DNR is seeking your suggestions, comments and questions on how to improve water quality in the Cedar River basin. From the Minnesota line to Mason City, from Waverly to Cedar Rapids, the DNR is looking for your input.

Whether you live near the Winnebago, Shell Rock or Cedar River, the quality of the water in those rivers affects the drinking water supply for people downstream. That includes Cedar Rapids, where excess nitrates are causing problems with the water supply.

To address these issues, the DNR has developed a draft water quality improvement plan, also known as a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL). TMDLs are calculations that determine how much of a pollutant a water body can receive and still meet water quality standards. The plan includes information on how conservation efforts in the watershed, or area that drains into the river, can improve water quality.

To discuss the draft plan, the DNR will hold public meetings in Charles City, Waterloo and Cedar Rapids at the following times and locations:

- Charles City: May 15, 2 p.m., Charles City Public Library, 106 Milwaukee Mall.
- Waterloo: May 15, 6 p.m., Hawkeye Community College, Room 107A, Tama Hall.

- Cedar Rapids: May 17, 1 p.m., Coe College, Kesler Lecture Hall at Hickok Hall.

Water quality monitoring shows that the Cedar River is impaired, or polluted, from where it meets McLeod Run to where Bear Creek enters the river, just upstream of Cedar Rapids. High nitrate levels keep this stretch of the river from meeting its designated use as a drinking water supply for thousands of residents. These people get their drinking water from shallow wells in sand and gravel deposits associated with the Cedar River.

Excessive levels of nitrate can make drinking water unsafe for pregnant women and infants under six months old, even if the water is used in infant formula or is boiled or filtered. Nitrates are water soluble and can make their way into water from runoff from farm fields, residential lawns and golf courses.

Iowans can submit comments on the Cedar River plan via e-mail, phone or mail (contact information below). The public comment period will close at 4:30 p.m. on June 2, 2006.

To receive a copy of the draft plan and supporting documents, contact:

Internet: [www.iowadnr.com/water/watershed/tmdl/publicnotice.html](http://www.iowadnr.com/water/watershed/tmdl/publicnotice.html)

E-mail: [chris.vangorp@dnr.state.ia.us](mailto:chris.vangorp@dnr.state.ia.us)

Telephone: Chris Van Gorp at (515) 281-4791

Mail: Chris Van Gorp, care of Iowa DNR, Wallace State Office Building, 502 E. 9th St., Des Moines, Iowa 50319

After receiving public comments, the DNR will forward the draft plan to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for final approval.

**For more information, contact Chris Van Gorp at (515) 281-4791 or Allen Bonini at (515) 281-5107.**

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## **CWSRF REACHES \$500 MILLION MILESTONE FOR WATER QUALITY**

### ***Intended Use Plan Also Released for Public Comment***

DES MOINES — In April, the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) achieved a major milestone as program funding for water quality protection projects exceeded the \$500 million mark.

Since 1989, the Iowa CWSRF has committed more than \$508 million for water quality projects. The CWSRF provides low-interest loans for water quality projects. Under Iowa law and an agreement with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the DNR and the Iowa Finance Authority (IFA) jointly administer the Iowa CWSRF.

The CWSRF funds municipally-owned wastewater treatment and sewerage facilities as well as storm water management improvements. In addition, low-interest loans for non-point source projects are available through the fund.

**CWSRF Intended Use Plan Released for Public Comment**

The draft Intended Use Plan (IUP) for the Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund is available for public comment. While the plan of action outlined in this SFY 2007 IUP may be amended in subsequent quarters, it is intended to lay out the general direction and goals of the CWSRF. Stakeholder input is invited; once public comments have been received the IUP will be presented to the Environmental Protection Commission for approval.

For more information on CWSRF programs or to review a draft of the FY 2007 IUP, visit [www.iowasrf.com](http://www.iowasrf.com) or contact Patti Cale-Finnegan, DNR, 515-242-6043 or [patti.cale-finnegan@dnr.state.ia.us](mailto:patti.cale-finnegan@dnr.state.ia.us).